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Allen's CMH bill, bringing fairness to mental health board representation, signed by governor

Lansing – State Sen. Jason Allen's bill designed to create greater equity between counties who have created large multi-county community mental health boards was signed by the governor yesterday.

"This law, while still taking population into consideration, will more fairly represent counties when determining the number of board designees," said Allen (R-Traverse City). "Everyone deserves fair representation."

When Great Lakes Community Mental Health and North Central Community Mental Health in northern Michigan merged into Northern Lakes Community Mental Health, the Community Mental Health Board was faced with a unique situation.

The Mental Health Code did not have the appropriate provisions in place to address health boards of such a large size, which created a disparity of representation between the counties. The new law allows for a more equitable representation.

"This balance will protect the interest of smaller counties, while maintaining an appropriate level of representation based on population," Allen said.

The law allows boards consisting of five or more counties to expand the size of the board to ensure that each county is allowed at least two members.

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